

Hard Times

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JOHNNY ROTTEN



SUICIDAL TENDENCIES,
BANGLES, LATEX SEX CAMP

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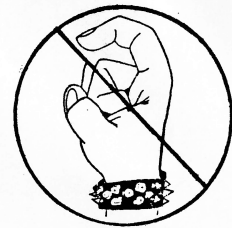
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I'm sure everyone has noticed the price increase. There are all sorts of expenses involved with publishing this rag that I didn't foresee or didn't think would add up to as much as they did. Needless to say, these expenses must be paid, and now that my savings has been depleted...

Also, we'll be printing on a bi-monthly basis, hopefully, only temporarily. Being that we all either work or go to school, we don't have the manpower or the organization to get this thing out every month, and frankly, I'm getting just as tired of being asked where the new issue is as I'm sure you are of asking me. Once the magazine is self-sufficient financially, I'll be able to spend more time with it, instead of pulling the old nine to five to pay the bills. Anyone who lives nearby and wants to help out is welcome to call. Next ish will be out around the middle of January. Enjoy the holidays.

Ron



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Quote:

"No one travels so high as he who knows not where he is going."

On The Cover:

JOHNNY ROTTEN
Phot by Norman Seeff,
courtesy of Elektra Records

Hard Times,

Congratulations on another very fine issue. (Oct.) The interviews(as always) were well done and informative- from cover to cover, not a disappointment to be found. I am especially pleased with your lengthy record reviews. You give the reader something to base an opinion on. I like that. I was also pleased to see that the member of your staff who reviewed the MOD FUN record was able to recognize the energy and fun that seems to come from the 45. While I do enjoy the record, I completely agree there is nothing new going on and while there is potential there is also room for improvement. I thought your reviewer's assesment was fair as well as accurate.

Good luck in the future and continued success.

Eerie Von

Lodi, NJ

Eerie is the bass player for SAMHAIN.

Dearest Hard Times,

I think Michael Produkt is to be given a Pulitzer Prize for bringing psychology to the masses with his "Grand Asshole Theory of Rock-n- Roll." (Oct.)

Although I don't think he knows it, Mr. Produkt described the classic narcissistic personality disorder.

The major characteristics of these people(Grand Assholes ie. narcissists) are grandiosity, self-centeredness, self-promotional behavior and lack of consideration for others. The narcissist was first described by that Grand Asshole Sigmund Freud, who concluded that to be an asshole you must have an overpowering ego. Thanks Sissy.

We find that most Grand Assholes are either first born or only children. Thus, one can see why people used to getting their own way come of age with a fuck you, I'm right and you're wrong kind of attitude. This attitude often spawns innovation in the creative narcissist, giving us Grand Assholes of RnR. Enough said. My nominations for other GA's are Prince, Bob Seldorf and even Elvis Costello, who once was quoted as saying, "If you're nice, great, but if you're obnoxious, people notice." Good job Elvis and I hope we have Grand Assholes for ever and ever.

Keep up the good work,

Steve Dudasik

Besides being Dianne's brother, Steve is a staff psychologist at a hospital in NJ. He also enclosed this mini-review of the Lou Reed show at the Capitol theatre in Passaic NJ on Sept. 25.

I once saw a Killing Joke show that I thought was the worst thing since John Denver. I didn't think a concert could be more disgusting. Well, I was in for a surprise.

The band opened with "Sweet Jane," which turned out to be the best song of the set, and who the fuck wants to hear *that* again? The show quickly became monotonous with Lou going through the set like "a walking tuinol." ("White Heat, White Light") Every song, I mean EVERY SONG was presented with the exact same rythm. Even the slower songs were "beefed up" to a boring level. What made it even worse was the band members, including Reed himself, were trying to look "into it" for those damn MTV cameras. (and we all know what MTV is.)

It became obvious after the middle of "Sweet Jane" that we were witnessing a once mythical performer going through the motions just to squeeze every last dime from a long finished career.

The next time Reed tours, (pray that he does not) I would suggest not going or better yet, going and wearing headphones blasting the VELVET UNDERGROUND. That way you can imagine that the singer on stage is once again performing innovative and exciting *real* music, because otherwise, there will be "Nothing Happening at All." (from Rock'n'Roll)

IS THIS PUNK?

After years of soul-searching, internal confusion, and self-evaluation, I have come to the conclusion that "punk" is no longer a movement, but a rapidly stagnating trend. This trend goes under the illusive guise of a non-conformist, awareness oriented subculture type movement. It is perpetuated by indefatigable individuals who are unwilling to step out of their pleasing ambience, and see it for what it truly is.

The primary function of "punk philosophy" was to liberate self-willed people from trend-following patterns of behavior. The forerunners of punk sought to break away from the norms dictated by their allegedly oppressive society. They presented the world a fresh, energetic sound and a thought-provoking mentality. Undaunted in their quest for recognized individuality, they advised us to be ourselves and not follow the crowd. In its inchoate pre-commercial stages, punk was, indeed, the embodiment of non-conformity. This nascent

philosophy is a series of powerful statements. I do not regret one moment in my life wherein I upheld this philosophy. It is this self-same propensity which forced me to see the corruption of the punk movement realistically.

When I first began to strive for punk status(status meaning "condition, state of affairs"), the archetypal ideology fit nicely into my life. I saw the world as a hostile environment antipathetic to my needs, laden with conformist morons who were content to sit before the T.V., listen to the radio, pay homage to the power wielding figureheads, and buy into the whole American way of life.

Following years of being a lone eyesore, scorned by the multitudes for my modes of dress, militant attitudes, and imposing hairdo, I entered a shopping mall last summer and was accosted by a young fellow of about fourteen who proceeded to inform me that I was "rad as shit." It was at that crucial moment in my life that I

saw the proverbial light; for a mere six months prior to my status as a "rad" individual, this little kid would never have dared to cross my path, let alone address me in a direct manner.

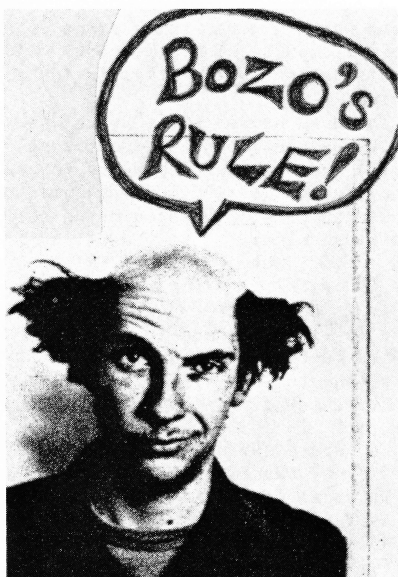
Today, you can traverse your neighborhood and see kids decked out in what once was considered very controversial attire. Indeed, MTV, the epitome of commercialism, endorses such styles. The superficialities which were, at one point in time, statements in themselves are now mere styles. After all, what are haircuts, clothes, and exterior appearances? Styles, facades, poses, labels... call it what you will, but it's still the same thing.

By labeling one's self as a "punk", one automatically restricts one's self to doing only "punk" things. In truth, one is following a trend of sorts. For instance,

Continued on pg. 2, col. 3



From pg. 1



The idea of clown power dawned upon me around March '83. Skeptical of a band I was in, I thought a band called "Los Bozos" with a bunch of nasty looking clowns screaming bad about war and government would be crucially rad. Since it takes balls to be a bozo, nobody would accompany me on this venture. I was forced to be the lone bozo stalking the junkie infested alleys of San Francisco. Clown power was born as skinheads became a popular topic of discussion. With the union jacket, spotted bleached jeans, big boots and skinhead, I wore the same costume but with the addition of the bozo hairstyle, and went skin bashing to glory. Once this was accomplished, I assaulted Europe for more than four months hoping to seek out other bozos in each country in order to form an International United Bozo Front, a coalition of angry, young, proud, Bozos dedicated to rid this sorry planet of heathen "No Bozos" scum.

First stop: England.

Fashion has gone run away in London. Multi-colored haircuts of every variety are commonplace. Even otherwise respectable, working businessmen and women participate. In the land where they take their hair seriously, I charged into King's Road and Picadilly Circus, where the punks charge a pound for picture posing with tourists. The skins were confused and the punks checked me out head to toe and accused me of being a "wanker." Since they couldn't define the word "wanker" and because clownish attitudes really rub my dick in the dirt, I kicked all their asses. (My bozo boots served me well.) You know you're hardcore when you can offend punks with your haircut. Dress codes were made to be deceived. To me, punk is how you think, not how you look. Down the path to bozo liberation.

Amsterdam was a killer. People freaking, touching my head, taking bets between themselves to see if my hair was real or not, hash dens blessed with my presence. With a regular, stereotypical punk haircut people point and laugh. With a bozo, they choke on their milk and cookies. No one was prepared for a "pipo" to turn their town upside down.

Germany was more willing to accept a bozo. Nazi skinheads are serious there, beating up punks ten to one, "seig heils", and really wanting the Aryan race to take over.(and first to go would be the punks.)

At a show in Hannover, a pack of about forty skins pointed at me, checking out my head. I take my bozo seriously but pretended not to notice. Later, when they jumped a kid half their size, I kicked their asses bad. I like kids.

Tales of the "buffoono" in Italy are average. I mastered the art of keeping a straight face whilst people fell in stitches with serious gut pains. As scientific research has proven, laughter can kill. I had to keep my cool. I didn't want a murder rap pinned on me.

The people in Italy are super fuckin' cool and the bands shred. Badass musicians with their gnarly guitar work and lots of mad thrashers. Eight more countries, disease free bozo sex and fringe benefits, then home.

Conclusion; most Americans are really stupid. It may be a cliché', but it's true that they're bourgeois, capitalistic, plastic, ignominious ass kissers. This resurgence of racism/nationalism and the stronghold the Ku Klux Klowns have on the government will be the death of recreational humor. Sure, the various bozos on TV are boring and phony, but talking serious clown action, the bozo presidential candidate offers hope to a dying planet. No promises, policies, debates, trivial groveling over issues or dinners with diplomats, just pure, unadulterated bullshit.(Tell the public what it wants to hear.)Maybe a little hand shaking or baby kissing because Bozo must play the game to infiltrate and destroy the system from within.

Once elected, Bozo's first actions would be to pass a bill for bozo rights, employment free of discrimination, declare "Bozo Day" a national holiday and take all weapons of warfare, melt them down and make them into pogo sticks for the kids. A true alternative to the doomsday nightmare, soon to become a reality.

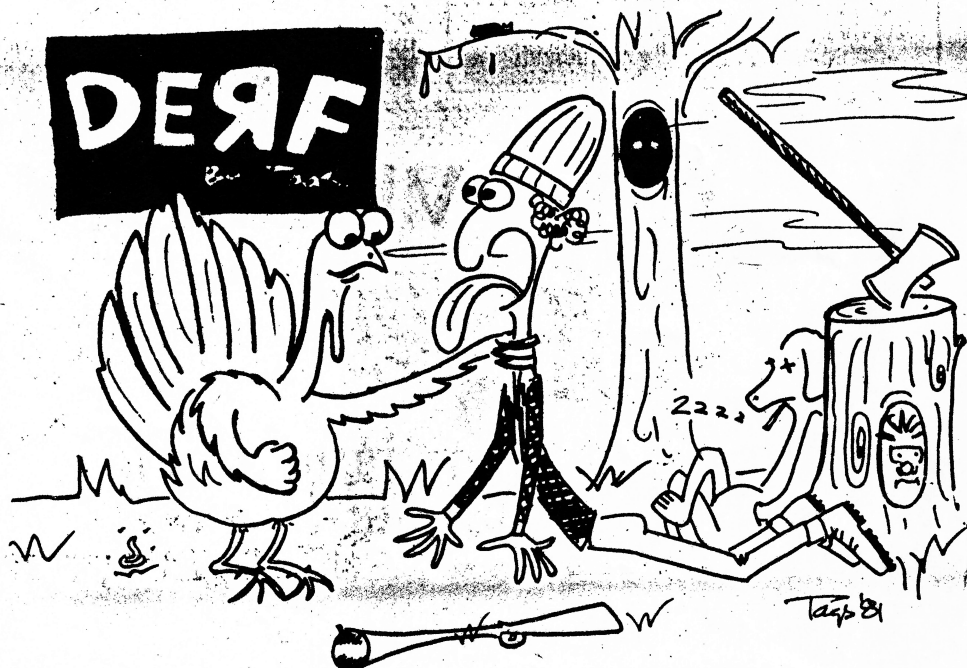
Think me an ass if you will, but I'll take my stand. No "No Bozos", take a bozo to breakfast, and vote Bozo in '88.

a true icon of the punk scene would never admit to liking "Prince" or the "Simple minds." In fact, the punk icon would never give either one of those bands a fighting chance. (Not that they particularly deserve one, mind you.) Nor would the stereotypical p.i. publicly extol Ronald Reagan. Certain practices are designated as being unacceptable in the punk realms. How contradictory this is, given that punk was initially designed to induce free thought. Is it possible to be completely free of external pressures whilst conforming to the punk norm? I don't really think so.

The situation is not entirely without remedy as there is one visible alternative. (At this point, a great many of you are probably saying "If you're so smart, then name an alternative!" Well, I have neither the energy nor the desire to come up with a whole new pre-packaged existence for you. I am not capable of saying, "Here is a new way of wearing your hair, here is a new way to dress, here is a new music form, here is a new consciousness, and we all go by this name.") There is always one alternative to following a trend and it is called individuality. That part is strictly up to you.

Do not, for one moment, fool yourself into believing that "punk" is wholly conducive to individuality. It is not. Do you think that the hippie movement, which the majority of punks so readily denounce, began with the intention of turning its followers into mindless conformists? The health food, the long hair, and the peace-loving nature are merely the still visible symbols of what was once an extremely non-conformist movement. Likewise, the mohawks, the tattered garments, the "Fuck-you" mentality are symbols of a movement; a movement non-conformist in philosophy, yet startlingly conformist in application.

In closing, I would like to state that I am not out to insult those who call themselves "punks." I am, however, giving positive sanction to the seemingly lost art of awareness.



GASP, GASP, OK. I'LL GO TO WHITE CASTLE INSTEAD, GASP.

LATEX SEX CAMP

by Joan McNally

Seeing Gia Genocide's East Village apartment was a memorable experience. What first struck me were the dolls. There were dolls EVERYWHERE- some with strange things written on them, some in S & M attire, and a couple of unfortunates whose heads dangled from strings above Gia's bed. The walls are splashed with red paint(simulated blood), suggestive artwork, and numerous posters(Most noticeably of the Pistols) There were also some cryptic messages written on those walls(and even on the refrigerator) such as; DAVID IS DEAD. BYE BYE DAVID. SID DIED FOR OUR SINS, and (my personal favorite) MEN ARE SCUM. Like her apartment, Gia's clothing, hair, and make-up was also designed to reflect her lifestyle and personality.

Gia, who at 18 has been going to nightclubs for the past five years, wears several studded, leather bracelets on each arm and large, silver rings on almost every finger. She has bright pink hair which is black at the tips. She always wears lots of make-up and outlines her eyes and lips in heavy black eye pencil... a striking image, even by New York City standards.

Her band, Latex Sex Camp, is composed of an assortment of the wild and wonderful... Jonty Slut on guitar, Bis Quick on bass, Joanna Babycrusher on drums and Billy Blood, Gia's singing partner.

They debuted at "Congo Bill" in NY's Danceteria. For a band that's been together for only a few months, they were unusually tight, confident, and enthusiastic. After a brief pornographic introduction, the band opened up the set with the rowdy "Sex in a Swamp." What happened next is that Gia apparently screamed too loud and supposedly blew out the PA. General consensus among the band, however is that the audience was getting "too violent" (some mild slam dancing) and having too much fun so the Danceteria staff decided to screw up the sound system to calm things down. Whatever the real reason was, the outcome was that there were virtually no vocals for the rest of the night. Despite this setback, Latex Sex Camp continued playing their brand of beach party horror rock to an enthusiastic crowd.

Joan: When did you first get the idea to form your own band and how did you develop the concept of Latex Sex Camp?

Gia: Well, I wanted to have my own band for a long time now. It was just a matter of finding the right people. I was supposed to sing for a band a few years ago, but they were mostly into hardcore so I refused to do it. Latex Sex Camp came to me in a vision... I wanted it to be different than hardcore...different than anything being played in New York today. There doesn't seem to be much happening in New York any more. I wanted to change that.

How do you think the gig went tonight?

I really like Danceteria but I think it's really fucked up that they want everybody to dress up and be cool, but

they get all pissed off when people want to have some fun. I think we accomplished what we set out to do though. I think everyone had fun anyway.

Because there weren't any vocals, I didn't catch the titles of any of your songs?

We played "Dead Baby Fetus", "Sex in a Swamp", "Baby Pull it Out", "Judy's in the Bathroom", "Slime Goddess", and "Big Baby Doll." We sing a lot about sex and horror, but we try to make it amusing and fun. We want people to see things in a different way.

What's your favorite song?

I don't know... probably one of our first songs, "Dead Baby Fetus".

Billy: Yeah, It's been written on her wall for years.

You're the co-singer, right?

Yeah, we're like Sonny and Cher.

Gia: I'm a little bit country and he's a little bit rock and roll.

Billy: No, that's Donny and Marie..

(Gia pours an unidentified beverage on Billy's leg.)

She abuses me and I take it. That's why we got along so good.

Gia, do you like dominant or submissive men?

Gia: Submissive.

I noticed a few whips in your bathroom.

Do you use them?

Yes.

(Carey, a Danceteria regular, enters and notices the puddle dripping from Billy's leg.)

Carey:(gasp) I invite you in here and you ruin my furniture! How dare you, you slutty bitch! I'm quite upset!(Exits)

When did you start dressing weird?

Gia: When I was four, I thought I was a cat. When I was seven, I thought I was Cleopatra. When I was nine I discovered "Gia"-the real me. At twelve I was going to Catholic school and found there to be hypocrisy in religion. I started wearing safety pins in my ears and spraying my hair pink. At thirteen I dyed my hair purple and it's been pink now for about the past three years.

Do you ever leave your apartment without your make up-on?

I was born with make-up on.

Do you have any heroes?

Nina Hagen is the most interesting person I've ever met, but I don't have any heroes. I want to be my own hero.

What's your goal in life?

To create a society where everyone is cool.

What's your definition of cool?

Me.

What are your plans for Latex Sex Camp?

In 1985 we're going to have an "I like a Man I Can Piss On" tour.

What is the most exciting thing you've ever done?

The most exciting thing I ever did was blow out the amp at Danceteria. (Smiles) No one's ever done that before.

AND THE WINNER IS...

Judging by the hoardes of entries we didn't receive (We received 7), most of you either didn't take our contest seriously, or couldn't figure it out. It was simple, really!(No one sent the correct answers)

The answers are; Dr Expresso races a Ducati. (Notice Italian names) Xenia makes the best perogies and Orest eats the most. (Notice Ukranian names) These should have been obvious, leaving it a 50/50 chance between who crashes the most(Mike), and who has the largest junk collection(Me).

The winner, by luck of the draw, was Sue Schroeder, from Rochester NY, who unfortunately couldn't make it. Alternate winners Mike Fedyk and Alex Garras had a blast.

Too bad there's not enough space to describe the exploits of the HT staff.

Ron.

ps. Due to the poor response to our first contest, we're cancelling our trip to Hawaii contest.



SUICIDAL TENDENCIES

by Ron Gregorio

Ron: It's been over a year since the release of your debut album. When is your next record coming out?

Mike Muir: As soon as we get home we'll be doing a demo and looking for a label.

What about Frontier? (The label on which they released their first lp.)

We want a major label. If you're on a major, they have to press up like 50,000 - 100,000 just to get five in each Tower Records.

How many copies of the first album did you sell?

It's not really important. It really doesn't matter how many records you sell. I mean, does that make you better or something? Shit, how many has Michael Jackson sold?

If you don't consider sales to be important, what do you consider important?

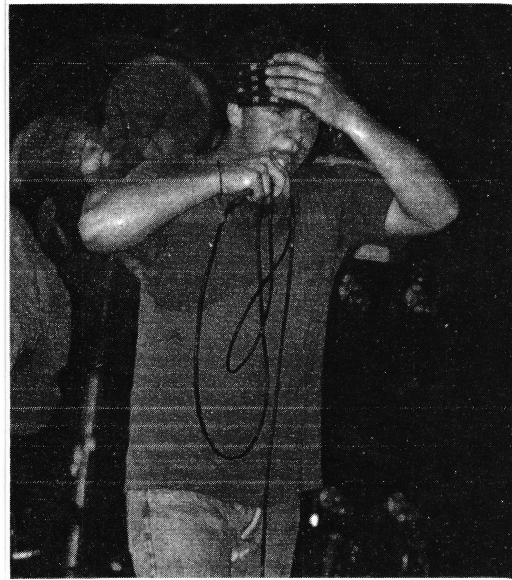
I do think sales are important, yeah, but what I mean is that to say, "We sold this many records," it doesn't mean poodly doo doo because everybody lies about how many they sold so you never know.

That's true. Some of the stuff we've been told is pretty outrageous... What made you decide to be in a band?

I guess it's like everybody else. You go to some shows and get involved in the music so someone says, "I got a guitar,"

and, "My brother's got drums," and, "I can get a bass," and the person with no talent and no money sings. Either that or he's got all the money so he buys the stuff for everyone and when the band gets good they kick him out.

I knew Louiche from school and he played in a band with Grant (former guitarist Grant Estes), and I knew Amery's sister (Amery Smith, former drummer), so



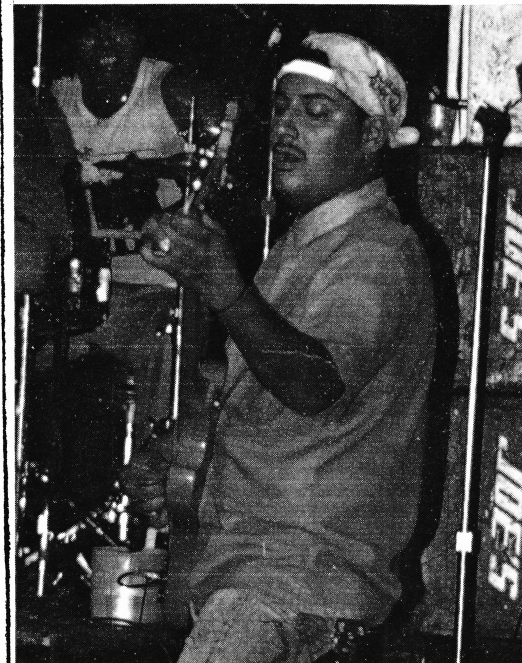
we got together and things seemed to work out. Then we got a new guitarist, John, who toured with us last summer, then we got Rocky on guitar about two months ago and Ralph Herrera on drums about two weeks before we came out.

What were the reasons for all the personnel changes?

It was that we wanted different things from the band.

How did you line up the Cutting Edge thing on MTV?

We just called them up and talked to them. They were familiar with the band and liked the material.



People got bummed when we were on MTV. I asked them, "Did you like it, did you think it was cool?" and they said, "It would have been cool if it wasn't on MTV." I don't understand that because if we weren't on there, they would have been playing more Duran Duran. When we were on there, for some people it was the first time they'd ever seen anything like us. I think it was the best thing that's ever been on MTV! It's a helluva lot better to see Suicidal Tendencies on there than it is to see Duran Duran.

Do you plan to do anything further with that media?

We'll be doing an "Institutionalized" video. We're paying for it ourselves.

The thing about a lot of videos is that, you know, you watch MTV and the video has nothing to do with the words to the song. In a sense, "Institutionalized" is made for a video because the story's already there. Where on other songs, they say, "We have to do a video so we'll do something dumb that will attract people's attention," but it has nothing to do with the song.



Is the script and directing your own concept?

This company's doing it and they're getting people to donate their time and stuff. The mother is going to be played by the woman who played the principal in Rock and Roll High School. The father's going to be played by the dude who played Eraserhead. They're doing it for free.

Being that "Institutionalized" is a pretty old song and it's gotten a lot of airplay, what do you hope to accomplish with the video?

On what, college stations? On the major stations it's been played on, it's been one of the most requested songs, but it's been played on very few stations. They don't put it in rotation. They'll try it out at two A.M. and they'll get a couple calls so they'll try it at midnight, then they'll slip it down to ten. They get so many calls, they have to play it.

If you've got a big name or you're on a major label, they'll put your record right into rotation. Our album's been out a year and three months, and "Institutionalized" is on the Repo Man soundtrack, which is on MCA so it's getting more airplay now because of the major label. Our album was out a year before that but it didn't get as much airplay because it's on an independent. That says a lot.

I think "Institutionalized" is something that everyone can relate to so we're hoping the major stations will pick it up once the video is out. I think that will do a lot of good for the way stations program because the programs are getting more and more alike. You change the station and what's the difference? It's something we're hoping to break into and maybe change a little. We've gotten letters from people who would have never heard it on a college station, who heard it on one of the few commercial stations that played it.

But then, other people put those people down and say shit like they're not real punks. Everybody had to go to a first show. I had to go to a first show and if someone had fucked with me I probably wouldn't be here right now. If you don't want new people to go, it's like saying, "What I'm doing here is not worth it, it's not good and it should be small." Everyone should keep an open mind. I don't really care what a person looks like, how they dress or whatever. If they like the band, that's great. I think a lot of the people that are, quote, "New to the scene" have a lot of energy and they show more discretion. They won't go just to hang out be-

cause there's a show and they feel like they have to go. I think that's the way it should be. I'm not into that "Support your Scene" thing. It makes no sense. If you don't like the band, don't go. It's not some kind of a cult scene, it's music, and you should judge it by what the musicians do. So many people come up to us and say, "You guys are really good but you should dress more punk," and I say, "Why, that's not me," and they say, "More people would like you." and I'll say, "Well, that's a sorry excuse because if we played disco, more people would like us. That's stupid that you would say that." Or they say that you shouldn't go to metal shows if you're a punk. Why shouldn't I go see a metal band if I really like them. That's like saying that if your Italian, you can only eat lasagna and spaghetti. If people are like that, we don't want them at our show. We're better off without them.

It's kind of like the army. A lot of people will tell you that the best time they ever had was when they were in the army. That's because they didn't have to worry about anything. They knew what time they were getting up, what time they were eating, what time they were going to bed, they didn't have to worry about paying bills, about little Johnny needing braces or anything like that. They didn't have to worry. They didn't have to think. Taking that thought a bit further, people are afraid of change. The so called punks don't like it when new kids come along because it threatens them. So when you have people doing what we're doing, they feel threatened.

I saw on the Donahue show where they had this person and he's saying what punk is. He has the audacity to tell me what punk is. There's no way. I do not like people speaking for myself and I can't speak for other people, I can only speak for myself. They did a thing on Merv Griffin but they said I wasn't punk enough to be on it. That's very interesting because the people they had on there—they just wanted to have extreme looking people that would cause a reaction and attract attention. It really bothers me when they have these shows on punk and someone says, "Well as punks, we want to do this, as punks, we want to do that, the movement is about this..." I say to myself, "How the fuck can you tell me what I want to do."

A lot of people who go to our shows won't go to punk shows. We like to play in front of all different kinds of people. If they don't like our music, that's fine. I



can't make people like us, just as they can't make me like certain stuff. But if they go, "I don't like you because you don't look punk," or, "because you don't take this political stance," then— I'm sorry, I won't say Reagan sucks, even if I think it. I won't say it so that makes our band no good. That makes a lot of sense. I'm not a preacher. I'm not a politician. I'm a musician and I want to play music and have a good time. People should know what's going on in the world but when it comes to Friday night and you want to see a band— I don't want to go hear about how fucked up El Salvador is. I want to have a good time, hear a band and go, "Wow, they jam, they're really good musicians, they have a lot of energy." I don't say, "Oh, these guys are really intelligent, they say how fucked up El Salvador is and sing about nuclear war." With my band, I can't go off and say these things. For me to say what's going on in El Salvador, how could I? How do I know? I can read this left wing paper and say that this is happening or I could read a right wing paper and say that this is happening but I don't know. It would take so long for me to be in a position where I felt that I actually knew enough to inform other people about it that the war would be over.

But some of your songs address serious topics.

With me, I put the lyrics to music. I hear the music and I get a feel for it. Like "Suicidal Failure." It's very slow and kind of depressing and I thought it was like someone trying to kill themselves and then I thought what could be even more depressing than that but someone trying to kill themselves but they can't. Like "Subliminal," it just seemed like things flashing. It reminded me of a movie I saw called Agency that was about subliminal stuff. We put the lyrics to the music because we feel the music is more important so we do the music first. Even if you have the best lyrics, if the song's no good, why play it?

(At this point, Alex CFA enters the room and is immediately subjected to scathing verbal abuse about his picture which ap

peared on the cover of HARD TIMES # 2. As Mike Studzinski takes some candid photos of Mike Muir, I assure him that we won't make him look silly, like Alex. In all fairness, I must admit that the cover shot of Alex is the best picture I've ever taken, and I'd also like to thank Alex for cooperating with us during an impromptu autograph session at the City Gardens in Trenton during which he autographed copies of HARD TIMES for his adoring fans.) P6 11

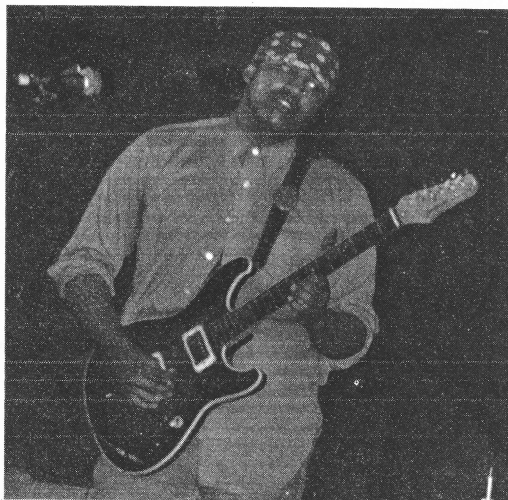
I don't know where this fits in with the rest of the interview or how we got on the subject, but I'll wrap this up with this segment because it's amusing.

People always sell themselves short. They say, "No, I can't do that, I should go get a regular job, nine to five," and they're not happy. You should just throw it out in a conversation sometime. You ask someone, "Are you happy?" and it fucks them up! I think I'm better off than anyone else in the world. I don't have any money, but that's not where it is for me. I can live with myself. I like what I'm doing and I'm having a good time. Money's not a problem. It's a pretty easy thing to come by. If you're creative and use your mind, you can make money. When I was in Hollywood, I'd stand in front of a store and when someone came out I would say, "Yeah man, you got any change?"

"No man, I spent it all in there."

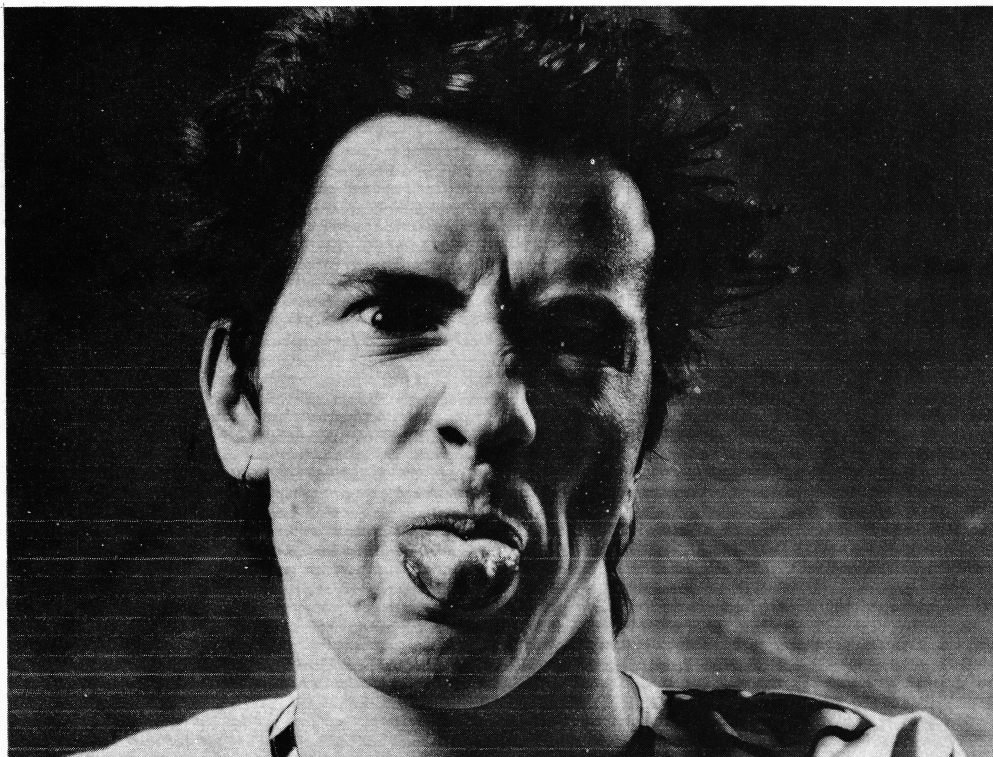
"What? You mean you knew how much it cost before you went in there? You figured out how much it cost with the tax, right down to the last penny? Dude, I'm not stupid. If you don't want to give me any money that's okay, I just asked. But you don't have to give me that shit. What is this? I'm not a person, you can't level with me? Why do you have to lie to me? Do you lie to everybody? Why do you have to do that, I mean, that's fucked up. Why can't you look me in the eye? I just need some money to take the bus." You make them feel dumb and embarrassed and half the time they give it to you just to get rid of you.

I'll have to try that tactic next time I try to sell magazines at a show.



JOHNNY ROTTEN

by Rich Zweiback
photo by Norman Seeff
courtesy of Elektra records



"The name is Johnny Rotten, NOT Lydon," states the man who once upon a time almost brought the music biz to its knees. Since the heyday of the Sex Pistols, Johnny Rotten has been a focal point in the new music scene. His post-Pistols career, revolving around Public Image Limited, has been an interesting, if not consistent exploration into dub, reggae, electronic, and dance music that never quite had the commercial success that many other graduates of the 1977 U.K. punk scene (Billy Idol, "I hate his music but we are mates," The Clash, Paul Weller) have met with. PIL's newest album, This is What You Want- This is What You Get, has more commercial potential than their earlier efforts with songs such as "Bad Life" and "This is not a Love Song."

Rotten, unlike the way the media likes to portray him is rather calm and accomodating, if a little bit arrogant.

Johnny Rotten: All right, let the agony begin!

Rich: Was it difficult to start PIL after the Sex Pistols broke up?

Extremely difficult: Virgin Records wanted the Sex Pistols vol. 2. Most of the stuff on First Issue was written while I was still in the Sex Pistols.

Why the change of name to Lydon?

I've always used Rotten. Lydon is used only as a legal name because Malcom (Malcom McLaren the Pistols' manager) claimed the rights to the name "Rotten." I know have the rights to the "Rotten"

name so I'll be called that.

What do you think of Malcom?

I don't want to be sued for libel so I won't say.

Getting on to your new album, it seems more danceable than your earlier efforts. Was that a conscious move on your part?

I think that all my stuff is danceable. Of course for some of them you'd have to be almost geriatric.

Is PIL more commercial or is everyone else catching up?

Everybody's catching up. PIL isn't commercial. We're a bit more accessible but there's nothing wrong with that. To be commercial means going out intentionally to be accessible which to me is condescending.

There's a different version of "This is not a Love Song?"

We cut down on the guitars. We completely re-did it. I found the earlier version a bit slacky, too loose. This one is much more my style.

What do you think of the current punk and hardcore scenes?

It's quite bad, it's all been done before, a long time ago. It's quite awful for middle-class kids to be trying to act

like they're working class. Seeing the same leather jackets... Why don't they join the army! It's all so conformist. There really isn't much difference between a Black Flag and a Black Sabbath except that Flag might not use the word "baby" quite so much.

Well, what about some band like Crass in the U.K? Aren't they a thorn in the side of the Thatcher regime?

They're not getting anyone nervous. Too political for my liking. They preach to themselves with a communist slant.

Do you think music can change things?

Very slightly. Music's for entertainment. It's good to look for change but you can't get anything done by listening to Van Halen. Fashion changes- music doesn't. Someone like Boy George...he's the Liberace of England!

Are there any new bands that you're partial to?

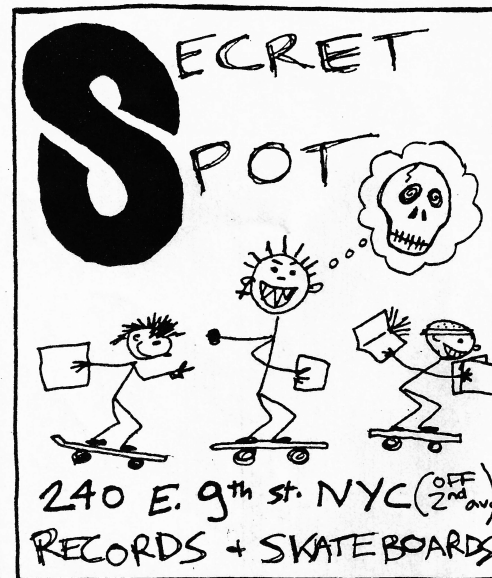
Not really. I don't have much chance to listen to other people's music.

You live in America now. Why the move from England?

It's become such a police state in England. So 1984-like. It's very grim. That's why I left. Also, I don't get any support over there.

Why are you still around after all these years?

Sheer persistence! I won't go away.



IS THIS MAN GOD?

by Mike Produkt

photos by Justina F

It's hard to explain why so many kids love Johnny Thunders. I mean he doesn't play any of the currently "hip" categories of music. Thunders ain't 'noo'wave, intellectual, political, fashionable, well dressed, hardcore, psychedelic, or even punk (not by alot of people's standards).

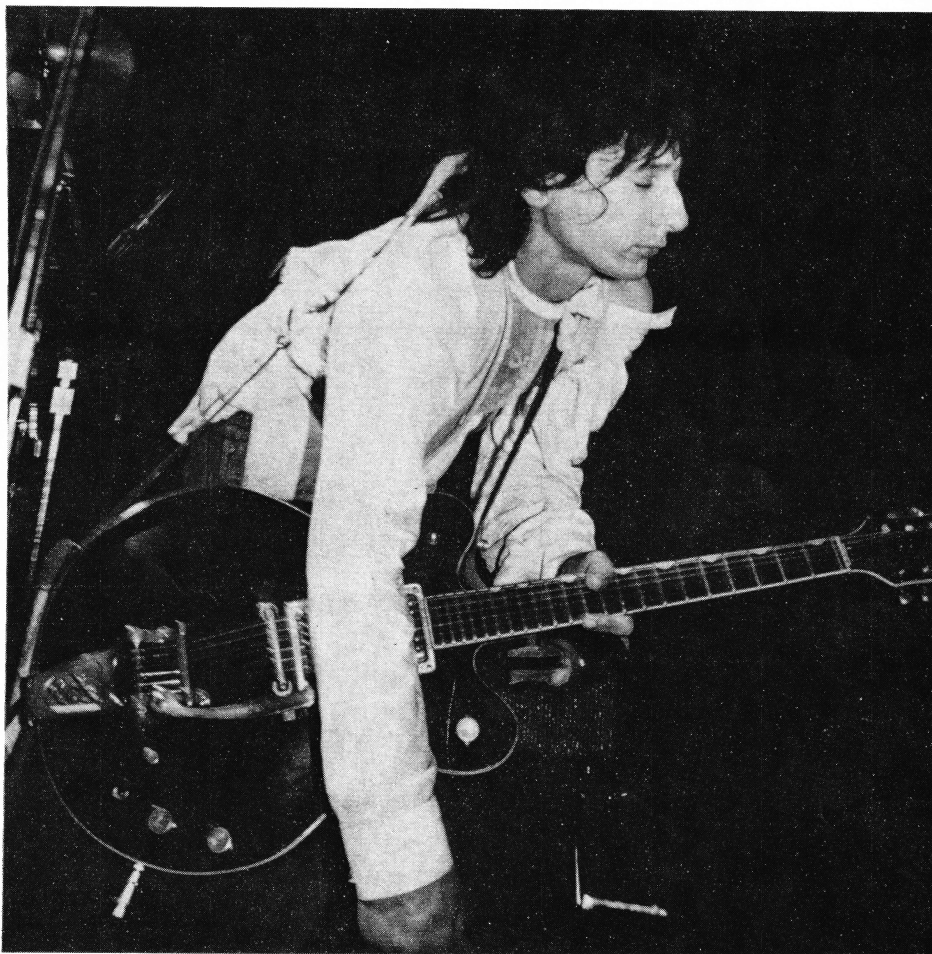
Yet at any of his "performances" you'll find all of the above kinds of people paying too much money to see Johnny stumble through an hour of out of tune classics. And lets face it kiddies, Johnny Thunders is a junkie (Nooo, C'mon really?) a sexist, a racist, a cheapskate (ask Walter), and an asshole. And still, despite all this, otherwise sane people like me and you spend so much of our hard earned (borrowed, stolen) money on tickets, import records, books, t-shirts and posters of this unwashed guitar hero(in). How cum?

Well kiddies, let's start from the beginning (not the beginning actually but somewhere in the middle). Way back in 1972, before most of us were cool, there was a bunch of longhaired guys who liked women's clothes who were kicking 'round New York called (what else) the N.Y. Dolls. The main guitarist for these rockin' transvestites was none other than, you guessed it music-fans, Johnny Thunders. Well these sexually confused masters of rockin noise put out one great album (the first) and one real good album (the second), went on tours, became big guys in the backroom of Max's Kansas City (R.I.P.), were voted both best and worst new band in the same issue of CREAM, next managed by Malcom "exploitation" McLaren, became leather Communists, and in '75 or '76 (depending on how you look at it) finally self

deconstructed. They left a huge legacy behind them. And try as they might, no one has come as close as the Dolls did to summon up the true spirit of loud, dumb, offensive, dirty, primal rock 'n' roll.

Johnny's machine gun guitar influenced everyone from Aerosmith to the Sex Pistols. Every 3rd rate heavy metal band rips off the Dolls look. The Sex Pistols, The Clash, X-Ray Spex, The Replacements, The Urban Dogs, and Lords of the New Church have all written songs mentioning, paying tribute or ripping off the Dolls or Johnny. Wow.

What made the Dolls so great was loud basic, sloppy music, hostile guitars and snarling vocals. This plus their "don't give a fuck what you think" attitude combined to give music the



biggest kick in the ass it had in years. When the Dolls went their separate ways it was Johnny who kept up the Dolls rock 'n' roll tradition. He formed the infamous Heartbreakers featuring X-Dolls Jerry Nolan and himself, Walter Lure (guitar), and briefly, Richard Hell (Bass), Dickey Heck was replaced by Billy Rath. The 'breakers spent a lot of time in England and even played with the Pistols, The Clash and The Damned on the famed Anarchy Tour. Johnny had even released one classic badly produced album there (L.A.M.F.) and soon got themselves booted outa the land of fish and chips. The 'breakers broke up and Johnny released an excellent solo album (So Alone). In the years since then a couple of albums have been released (Live At Max's is the best and the only post-Dolls Thunders record released in the U.S.) there have been dozens of Heartbreakers reunions featuring a cast of thousands etc, etc.

Enough of the history lecture. None of this explains Johnny's power. Well listen kiddies 'cause here it is, You go to a Johnny concert and what you get is a dirty, sweaty little giant playing dirty sweaty rock 'n' roll. Sometimes Johnny takes too much and you get a pathetic self parody, too wasted to find a chord or

remember the words. But sometimes when he's reasonably conscious and he's in a good mood, he'll stand at the front of the stage wide eyes staring at something at the back of the club no one else can see, tongue flicking in and out of his mouth like a lizard in heat and suddenly something will come over him. His eyes light up and his hand chops up the guitar like all those years of pain and junk never happened. The mood in the audience is electrified, this is what they've been waiting for. Even the ones who came to see Johnny Junkie stumble around and make a fool of himself are impressed. It's a brief moment but Johnny fans learn to live off these brief moments.

Some people look at him and see only Johnny Junkie, a poor little addict good for a laugh or two but basically just someone to be ignored or ridiculed. Well beyond the fact that his emaciated form contains true fire, what ya gotta know about Johnny is that he's done everything for rock 'n' roll. People wonder what's been keeping him alive this long; nothing else but that ol' jungle music. Johnny

lives, breathes, and eats rock 'n' roll. What you see on stage is a man who's been crucified for rock 'n' roll. Didn't mean to get so melodramatic but basically it's this: Johnny's got an earthy charisma. It's not Johnny as a god or superhuman that attracts people, it's Johnny as a human being, perhaps one that's lived through

more shit than you'll ever know but still it's the facts that he don't pose or pretend, that he fucks up, and that he's given everything for his music that keeps the kids (and me) comin' back and wastin' their money.

Rumor has is that there's at least two warrants out for his

arrest here in the states. One for drugs and one for hitting someone over the head with a guitar. True or not it don't look like Johnny's gonna be comin' back for a long time. That's a shame 'cause it really don't seem like New York without Johnny playing somewhere every 2 or 3 weeks.

Shit, I didn't wanna write a eulogy.

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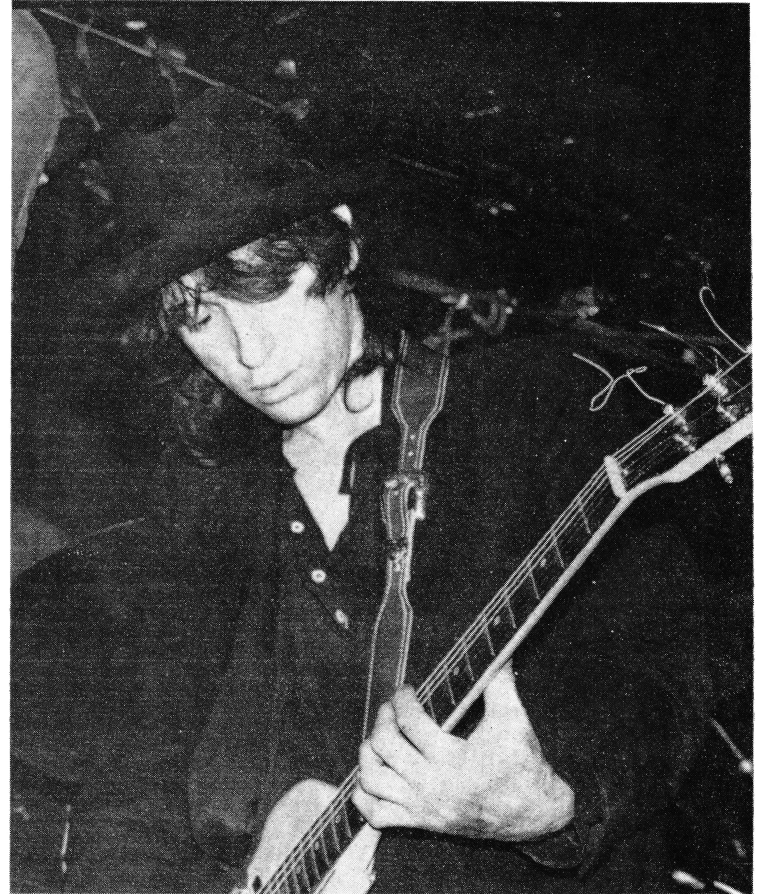
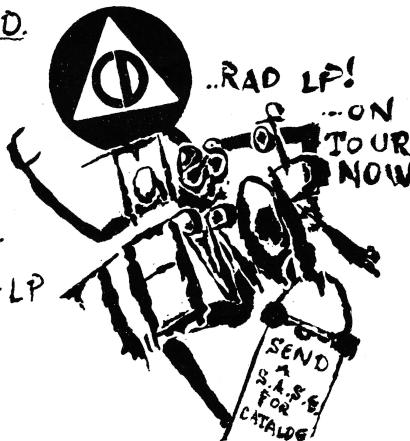
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Addendum

(This article was written awhile ago so it's a bit out of date. In case you haven't heard a resuscitated Heartbreakers have been gigging in Merry Old England, that mother of a country. A live document, how's that for a cliché, was released and everybody loves it except me, but I have been assured it is purely a defect in my own personality that prevents me from realizing how amazing it is. Personally I think the horrible sounding new live Dolls album kicks the shit out of it, but it figures I'd say something like that. There was almost a 'breakers reunion in N.Y. but Johnny never showed. Still the rumor mill keeps grinding with stories about Johnny producing the next Hanoi Rocks album. I guess they're paying homage to their haircuts. Also, get this, I have heard persistent stories about the Dolls getting back together for concerts and an album. When you wish upon a star...)

Good night and turn up those monitors!

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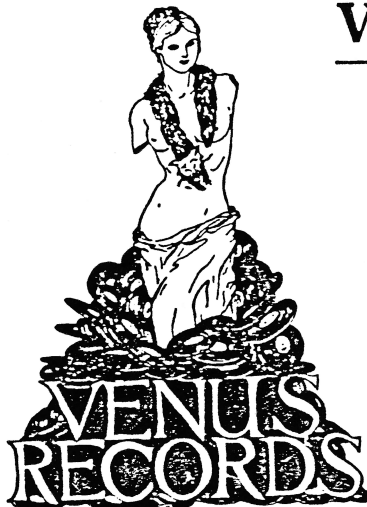
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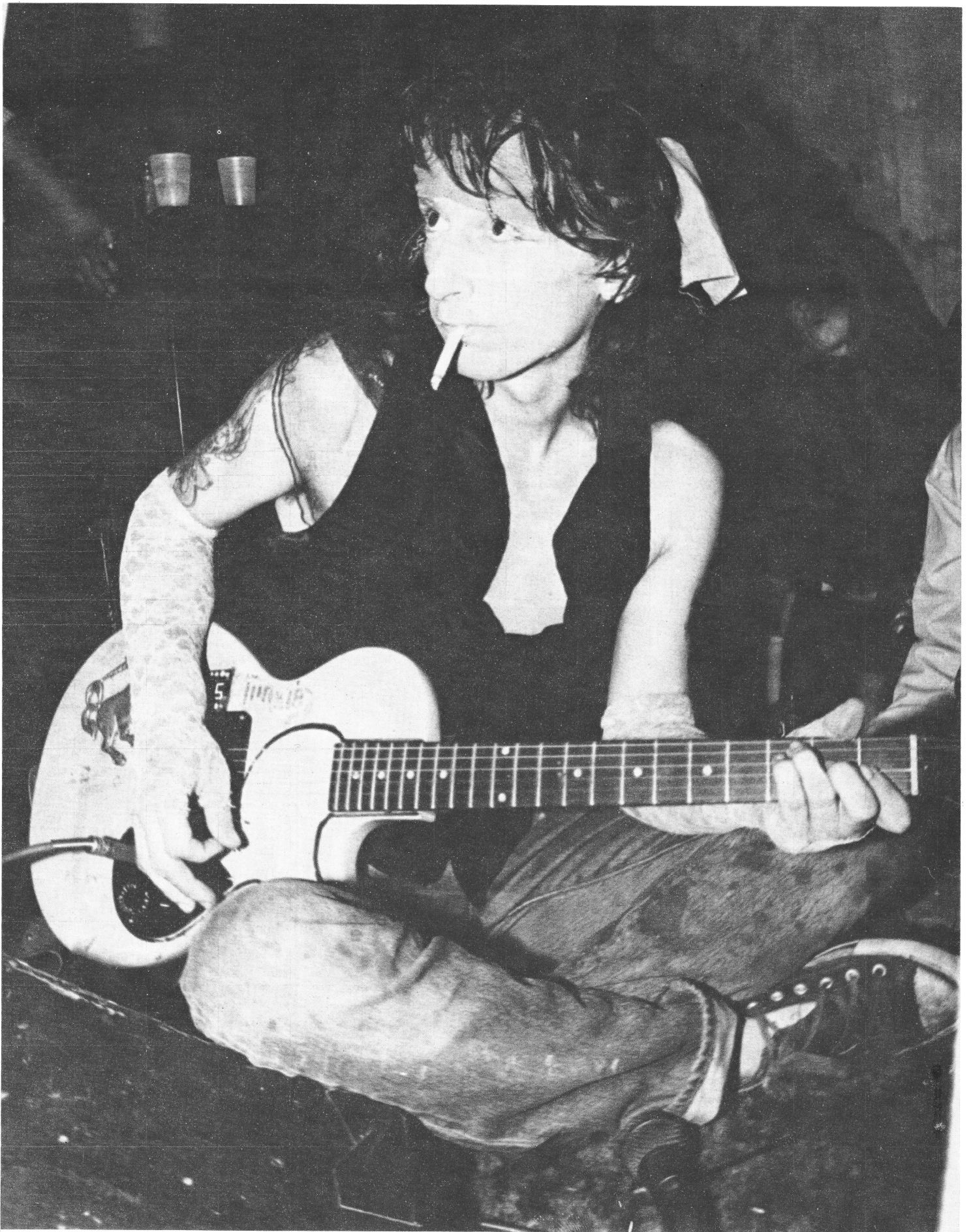
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BANGLES

by Gene Sobczak

photos courtesy of Faulty(?)
and Neil Zlozower, Columbia Records

Three years ago, the Bangs Vicki Peterson, guitar vocals and bass; Susanna Hoffs, guitar and vocals; and Debbi Peterson, drums vocals and bass, emerged from the fertile soil of Southern California's new music renaissance with a sound that intimated a genuine appreciation for the mid-sixties romp of the Beatles, Paul Revere and the Raiders, and the Monkees. Their vocals--most notably their finely honed harmonies-- captured the vocal jubilation of the Mamas and Papas, and were soon established as the Bangs earmark, leading the band to the forefront of the Los Angeles music scene.

Following the release of their debut single, "Getting out of Hand" b/w "Call on Me," released on their own Down Kiddie label in Dec. 1981, the band was forced to undergo a name change, when the longer established, New Jersey-based Bangs threatened the band with a lawsuit. The name was modified to the Bangles, a new bassist, Annette Zilinskas was added to the fold, and near the end of 1982 the band released their self-titled, debut ep on the now defunct Faulty Products label. The record recieved well deserved laudation from the rock press. The Bangles then went on to support the English Beat on a nationwide tour, and subsequently headlined their first tour in the spring of 1983.

Within the past year, the Bangles have recruited a new bassist, Michael Steele (a female) and have signed to a major label, Columbia Records. In the early summer, the band released their first full-length album, All Over the Place. In addition, a video for the band's first single, "Hero Takes a Fall," increased FM airplay.

All appears to be going well for the Bangles, but a long time fan, such as myself, can't help but feel a bit skeptical about the band's new found success. Undeniably, All Over the Place is a strong album, devoid of any slack or filler. But since the Bangles lunded their deal with CBS, they seem to have become more of a corporate commodity than an earnest group of rockers, as manifested by the greater attention now placed on their physical appearances--on the fact that they are indeed an all girl band.

Does an image, however, necessarily take away from a performance? How, if at all, do the Bangles reconcile their new "look" with their musical convictions? Does a band need to forsake an image in order to remain true to their music? Unfortunately, I don't have the answers to these questions, because HARD TIMES was not granted an interview with the Bangles. We failed to send CBS a written request

supposed to be held on a Thursday, was moved to Wednesday with no advance notice.

The following interview was conducted after the Bangles performance at the Peppermint Lounge in May 1983on, ironically, the eve of Faulty's demise. While the interview may be a year old, the points and observations made in it are both timely and relevant.

Gene: Where do the comparisons between you and other girl groups, like the Go Go's, begin and end?

Susanna Hoffs: They end very quickly.

Vicki Peterson: They end here.

Susanna: They end here, because we really have nothing to do with them. Really! I mean, we didn't get started because of them. Our musical influences are completely different. We sound different. We are different. We're different people! I am not Jane Wiedlin, by the way.

Vicki: Yes she is.

Susanna: I am actually, but I'm wearing a wig. (Laughter) "Hi! I'm Jane Wiedlin, and you can't ever have enough hairspray, ever." No, we have nothing to do with them. We're just girls. I mean, we get along well as people. Vicki and I like to write songs together. Debbi's a great drummer. Annette is a cool person. The fact that we're all girls is almost secondary. Really. I mean, we've all been in other bands with guys in them-- with male people.

Vicki: Similar stuff. It's just, you know, it wasn't until we all got together that it clicked. It really wasn't until Debbi and I met Susanna, and we found someone with the same background that we had. Ut was pretty amazing to find her.

Susanna: Yeah! I was looking for people who were really dedicated, who wanted to fuckin' get down and do it. I worked in other bands that were flaky, but these guys had similar ideas, and Vicki and I both wanted to write together. That's why it happened. It wasn't like, "Oh boy, let's do something gimicky and cute." It had nothing to do with that, really.

Vicki: We didn't have any problems with that because when it came to playing clubs we already had put out the record as the Bangs, and there was enough interest from just the little airplay that that single garnered, that clubs were calling us. So, that wasn't A PROBLEM. Besides, we always had friends that were in bands, and we would open for them. That was the easiest thing.

Even though you may feel that being girls is secondary to being musicians, how did the record companies and club owners react when you approached them?

Susanna: Dream Syndicate, the Three O'Clock, We're the Salvation Army, The Descendants...

Vicki: It wasn't any of this, you know, "club owner approaches all-girl band and says Hey, honey."

Susanna: Or "let's put together three bills with all-girl bands, so men could beat off



watching." Nothing ever happened like that.

Presently, there is a renaissance of sorts of girl groups. Because of this, has it been harder or easier for a group like the Bangles to get started?

Susanna: Both. In some ways we are so sick of being compared to bands that musically we have nothing to do with. On the other hand, in some ways it's nice that girls are in rock and roll, doing what they want to do. From Pat Benatar to Chrissie Hynde to the Go Go's, you know, they're doing what they want to do.

Vicki: There's just no reason why it shouldn't happen. I just don't understand the problem, really. I see that people look up on stage, and there are four women up there, and they say, "Oh, okay. This is obviously a gimmick or this is something that was preconceived." Well, it wasn't really, and I just don't see the problem. Why can't women play rock and roll? We've never considered that we can't.

Do you feel that everyone from the musicians to the fans to the executives at the record companies are still sexist in light of the new wave of female groups?

Vicki: Yeah, of course; it's out there, you know. But I think it's something that's going to diminish, because there are more and more women coming out and deciding that this is what they want to do and realizing that there's no reason why they shouldn't do it. The more there are, the less it's going to be a novelty and a journalistic angle to start out an article, "Well, last year was the Go Go's, this year is the Bangles," or anything like that.

Susanna: It's really easy to start with a Go Go's non-comparison. In every article that I've ever read there's a Go Go's non-comparison. (Imitating a writer) "They're four girls from L.A., and we expect them to be kind of jumping on the bandwagon of the Go Go's, but they're really nothing like the Go Go's." For some reason, they mention them anyway. In Rolling Stone they mentioned them, but they also mentioned the Hollies, and I was very pleased by that. Sometimes they mention the Beatles, the Yardbirds, the Stones, Petilia Clark, Dionne Warwick, and other people that I feel much more inspired by. Those are the people that inspired me to do what I'm doing today.

Some band history now. How long have you been together?

Vicki: About two years.

How did you meet?

Susanna: An ad in the paper, actually.

Vicki: Yeah. Sue called up an ad that my roommate, who was a guitar player also, had put in, and we started talking. It was right after John Lennon had died. We shared our feelings on that experience, and we just clicked.

Susanna: We were like two strangers blabbing on the phone for two hours, even though I was calling an ad that had nothing to do with Vicki. I finally talked to



her roommate and there was nothing there and I thought, "Shit, maybe I should call Vicki back."

Vicki: So we just got together in a garage and exchanged tapes and realized that this was something that was going to work.

Susanna: We decided that night that this was it.

Was your sister (Debbi) involved in all of this?

Vicki: Yeah. Debbi and I have been playing in a band together since high school, since '76, '77.

Does everyone in the band have similar musical influences?

Susanna: I'd say so.

Vicki: Definately.

Susanna: We all enjoy country music, although I'd say that Vicki, Debbi, and I were all complete Beatles fans. That was probably our first love.

Vicki: That was something that started when we were five years old and we knew then that we'd be doing this. It was a matter of going in the garage and picking up a tennis racket and deciding that I'm

Paul McCartney and this is it. I've got to do this.

Hence the Revolver-like cover of your debut ep and the individual singing credits on the back cover.

Vicki: We did that because we have three lead vocalists. We want people to know who's who and who sounds like what.

Susanna: Our personalities are different, and we want that to be clear, who's who.

Hey, our road manager is telling us that we have to go. Let's get a few more questions in.

What is the future of the Bangles?

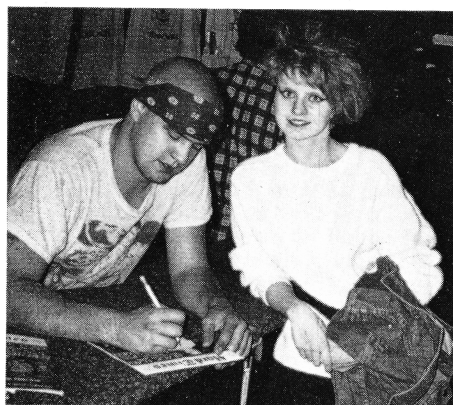
Susanna: We're going to make a record this summer.

Vicki: We hope.

Susanna: You know, if we ever get in a plane crash, we might write "Flight 505" or whatever the Rolling Stones' song is.

Vicki: L10 Eleven.

Susanna: L10 Eleven, you know, Miami to the Bahamas. Ditching is imminent. If that happens to us, I'll definately write a song about it.



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SAMHAIN-INITIUM

"From the ashes of the Misfits" reads the advertisement for Initium, the debut album from Samhain, confirming the fact that the Misfits, New Jersey's (*The World's!*-Ed.) premier shock-rock outfit are no longer among us.

Following the release of their acclaimed debut album, Walk Among Us, the Misfits rode on the crest of a burgeoning punk movement that bought them immense popularity both here and abroad. At the helm of the attack was vocalist/songwriter Glenn Danzig, whose infatuation with the quasi-satanic, splatter sub-culture was the driving source of inspiration which laid down the foundation for the Misfits. While detractors commonly referred to the band as the KISS of punk rock, their fans, and Lord knows there were plenty of them, embraced the Misfits' horror/razor shtick wholeheartedly and eagerly awaited each new release and performance.

Unfortunately, the band was never able to match the manic splendor of their first album. An uneven live album, numerous mediocre ep's and an even more dreadful second lp led one to believe that the Misfits, or Glenn Danzig in particular, was quickly running short of ideas. Eventually, Glenn decided to start afresh, rather than to watch the Misfits decay to complete ruin. (For more information, see the Samhain interview in HARD TIMES Vol. I, No. 1)

Thus rises Samhain, and since Glenn Danzig was the prime mover of the Misfits, it comes as no surprise to find his latest band bearing more than a passing resemblance to his past endeavors. However, while Initium retains much of the Misfits charm and spirit, it also manages to break into new frontiers-- for better and for worse.

The album opens with the title cut, a narrative in which Glenn spews forth some Omen-inspired proclamation with Creature Feature conviction. Scary, huh kids? Well, no. Note how similar, though, "Initium" is to the devil drivel which introduces Motley Crue's latest release. Now, *that* IS scary. In keeping with this heavy metal spirit, the following cut, "Samhain," lifts the drum part from Iron Maiden's "where Eagles Dare" and the music from any given Black Sabbath chestnut. Glenn Danzig contends that Samhain is not a hardcore band, but is the dirge-like metal sound of "Samhain" an indication of what one can expect from the remainder of Initium?

Thankfully, no. While a few other cuts, most notably "Horror Business" boast patented metal riffs, the majority of the songs tend to lean towards the sound and style of Walk Among Us, quick-paced, punk/pop fusion with strong melodies and those now familiar marine corp harmonies. Danzig's delivery carries a solid punch, and his screams rank among rock's best.

The last three cuts on Initium, "The Shift", "The Howl", and "Archangel" are by far the most interesting, as Glenn takes his stab (pun intended) at writing lighter and more pop-oriented material.

These songs are also by far the weakest compositions, primarily because they fail to sound convincing. Nevertheless, Glenn Danzig should be commended for breaking loose from a proven style and for showing his audience that he has begun to challenge his skills as a songwriter.

Although Initium is not a perfect album, neither is it a disappointment.

Glenn Danzig is a talented individual, and his new band, Eerie Von on bass, Steve Zing on drums, and Damian on guitar, adds greater depth and variety to the music. Samhain, already hailed as one of the three most significant bands of 1984 by WNYU, could very well accomplish what the Misfits never could--to attract an audience outside of punk/hardcore circles. While currently rising from the ashes of the Misfits, in the future, Samhain may well rise above the entire flock.

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Gene Sobczak

CYANAMID-STOP THE WORLD

Feel like going on a quick trip through someone's alienated perceptions? Perhaps this E.P. is just what you're looking for. Apparently a local group (Mutha records being located in West Long Branch), Cyanamid go for the guts on the six tracks here, four quickies and two extended pieces, all of which appear to be rooted in the outlook of what I'll call "surface consciousness," that of the lumpenproletariat in most cases.

The quickies are pretty pedestrian, although the (unidentified) vocalist is gruesome enough to bring some personality to "I Hate Pigeons" and "In The Hole." The real efforts on the record, however, are "This Is Hell" and "Stop The World," clocking in at 5:19 and 7:55 respectively. Both receive minimal support from the band in order to highlight the litany-style poetry of the growling vocalist.

In many ways, these performances take the ideology of most hardcore to its logical extreme. As you might imagine, it's not a nice picture - all through the Armageddon of toxic poison, abortions, war, poverty, and madness envisioned by the band, one gets the feeling of suffocation and despair...all of which is fine, except that the other side of the coin is that SOME OF US want to LIVE, even if that means getting together and fighting both the horrors voiced by Cyanamid AND the deadening pessimism of the band. This issue, of what is being said by the hardcore groups today and what it means to them and us, is becoming progressively more prominent as time goes on, and the real surprise of Stop The World is that it's taken so long for these sentiments to come to the surface.

In terms of necessity, I would recommend Stop The World to people on both sides of the question - the band does manage a heavy grind that cuts close enough to impress even the most passive listener. But keep a copy of Etheridge Knight's Poems From Prison nearby, if you want to know what ELSE can come out of being at the bottom of a neo-fascist society. In a word, C-O-N-S-C-I-O-U-S-N-E-S-S.

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THE LEFT-IT'S THE WORLD

There's a moment near the end of this record in which pure transcendence is achieved; out of a blistering thunder of guitars, bass, and drums emerges a terse statement of purpose from the vocalist:

"Here on the frontline/
things can change/
at the dawn of a future age/
yesterday has just begun/
tomorrow is what's important."

In one sweeping stroke, priorities are set, cynicism & idealism are equally rejected, and activism rather than pessimism suddenly becomes viable. The song ends with the band taking for the hills in a rush of adrenaline.

I must admit that I was quite unprepared to find myself so taken by The Left (as it were). It seemed impossible that they could even remotely live up to the implications of their name (I can recall being burned before on such gambles). Nevertheless, It's The World is easily one of the best debuts by an American band this year, as it raises questions which most hardcore bands have either ignored or bypassed for some time.

All of which is not to say that The Left are a hardcore band per se. Despite the challenge of "CAN'T BE CLASSIFIED" which appears on the back of the sleeve, it isn't too difficult to trace their influences. For the most part, The Left are rooted in standard popular forms via the 60's - I can detect traces of folk-rock, New York-style psychedelia, Merseybeat, basic rhythm-and-blues, even a hint of what was once called "power pop." But rather than be smothered by form, The Left are confident enough in their abilities to push substance over style, infusing their songs with the spirit and drive that propelled the best hardcore over the edge. "Hell," the opening cut, is a perfect encapsulation of fatalist ideology (embraced by more and more of the punks I meet these days), run down in a pithy description: "It's where you go for the hell of it;"

"It's kinda hot/
And you sweat a lot/

And if you're weak/
You might get eaten."
The eat-or-be-eaten dead end of competitive capitalism is relegated here to the realm of despair that it advocates, yet this is done without invoking Reagan or any of the other easy targets attacked by some groups, which makes the song a double-edged sword. The Left recognize that self-critique must complement any direct attack on the prevailing order, lest isolation and decadence set in. The old banner of youth which was destroyed by punk's observation that "no one is innocent" is here taken up again, and the band spends the rest of the album addressing the excesses and pessimisms of it's peer group. "R.I.P." and "Fuck It" are particularly on-target in giving all of us a swift kick in the balls, and anyone who feels embarrassed listening to these tracks probably still has a conscience; anyone who doesn't is fooling themselves.

Of course, there ARE some positive vibes (ha-ha) going down on It's The World - The Left keep themselves above self-pity and self-righteousness by offering all of us the chance to take up the challenge. "5:00 A.M.," which closes the record, presents the alternatives of waking up wanting to die or wanting to live...which is really the ultimate choice in the long run, isn't it?

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SSD- HOW WE ROCK

It's no coincidence that the front of this record looks a lot like Judas Priest's Point Of Entry, nor that the back looks more than remotely similar to AC/DC's For Those About To Rock. Yes, that's right, the former SS Decontrol has more or less gone "heavy metal," depending on how you define that genre, yet the move doesn't really bring about a major change in their style. What it might bring about is a little bit more in the dollars-and-cents department - I mean, what the hell is the point in "selling out" if you don't get to reap the benefits?

Unfortunately (for SSD), How We Rock is steeped in the type of metal posturing that Black Sabbath employed in the early part of their career - slow, lumbering, loose-structured, and vague. Of course, this was great back then, but even Sabbath knows enough not to bother with the form any longer. The only real artistic change which can be noted in today's Heavy Metal ironically owes it's origin to the very revolution that the punks forced on loud guitar-dominated music: a demand to clean up the sound and impose a little coherence to the songs, whether they're about devils and heretics or leather and lust. If SSD hope to gain the audience which is currently grooving to the likes of Iron Maiden and Ratt (and they can have them), they'll have to take that next important step. Until then, they don't stand to cut it as either punks or metelers. As for How We Rock, "On The Road" is O.K., and "Words That Kill" comes close to the Spinal Tap

hall-of-fame, but if this is really what you're looking for, I've heard better elsewhere. Sorry, guys.

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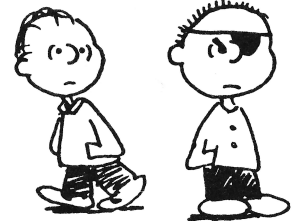
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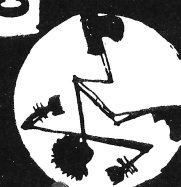
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